



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs**  
**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

Governor Charles D. Baker  
Lt. Governor Karyn E. Polito  
EEA Secretary Matthew A. Beaton  
DCR Commissioner John P. Murray

## **Recreational Advisory: Department of Conservation and Recreation Reminds Residents about Winter Ice Safety**

BOSTON— Thursday, February 26, 2015- Though lakes, ponds, and streams across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can provide wonderful winter recreational opportunities, it is important to use caution and be aware of the potential dangers that icy conditions can carry. Here are some important ice safety tips from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Massachusetts State Police:

- Never go onto the ice alone.
- Always keep your pets on a leash. If a pet falls through the ice, do not attempt a rescue—go for help.
- Beware of ice covered with snow. Snow can insulate ice and keep it strong, but it also can insulate the ice and keep it from freezing. Snow also can hide cracks as well as weak and open ice.
- Ice formed over flowing water (including springs under the surface) is generally weaker than ice over still water.
- Ice seldom freezes or thaws at a uniform rate. It can be a foot thick in one spot or an inch thick in another.
- If a companion falls through the ice and you are unable to reach that person from shore, throw something to them (a rope, tree branch, even jumper cables from the car, etc.). If this doesn't work, go or phone for help before you also become a victim. Get medical assistance for the victim immediately.
- If you fall in, try not to panic. Turn toward the direction you came from. Place your hands and arms on the unbroken surface, working forward by kicking your feet. Once the ice is solid enough to hold you, and you can pull yourself out, remain lying on the ice (do not stand; lying down spreads your weight across a wider area, lessening the weight on any one spot) and roll away from the hole. Crawl back the way you came, keeping your weight distributed, until you return to solid ice or ground.
- As the season progresses, plan accordingly and use caution, as the condition of older ice greatly varies and is subject to rapidly changing conditions.

For further tips, including information on hypothermia and cold water dangers, please visit the featured section, “Stay safe, keep warm in extreme weather” at [http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/recreation/safety/ice\\_safety.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/recreation/safety/ice_safety.htm), which also offers additional ice safety tips.

Several DCR properties offer guided outdoor skating programs in season, please visit the website for details. For contact information for these parks, as well as information about additional winter recreation opportunities in Massachusetts state parks, visit DCR’s website: [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr).

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